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## PURPOSE OF A TIME AND TALENT FAIR

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### *Goal*

To Increase Levels of Ministry and Involvement: This will result from more people completing Time/Talent commitment forms and from parishioners learning about programs, ministries and services they wish to utilize. This will in turn help people to grow in their relationship with God, with each other, and thus, help to further God's Kingdom.

### *Purpose*

- 1) **Informational:** help parishioners gather information that will assist them in completing their Time/Talent Commitment form. Note that information must occur before solicitation. The Ministry Fair should not be a solicitation tool. Solicitation occurs elsewhere in the process (mostly on Commitment Sunday).
- 2) **Spur Interest:** To increase interest in making a time or talent commitment.
- 3) **To help all parishioners in attendance** (many of whom won't end up volunteering) to learn more about what is going on at the parish so they feel better about their parish and are thus more inclined to support it, maintain their membership, and grow from utilizing some of the services (i.e., religious education, counseling, RCIA, etc.).
- 4) **To help the ministries and organizations involved** get better organized and increase their effectiveness by developing a greater sense of their mission and purpose.

Ministry fairs are a lot of work, but they can greatly enhance the success of your annual time and talent renewal if planned and executed well. Fairs are a natural way of getting stewardship to work right then and there.

The following is a list of **14 Do's and 6 Don'ts**, to help plan a stewardship fair.

*(Adapted from the Diocese of Wichita)*

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## 20 TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL TIME AND TALENT MINISTRY FAIR

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### ***DO'S***

1. Do talk with your pastor and ask for his support from the pulpit.
2. Do form a team with as many people as possible.
3. Do set dates long in advance in order to get ready. Fairs take a great deal of time and planning.
4. Do ask (do not simply invite, but actually ask in person) every organization in your parish to submit a brief description about their organization (very important!)
5. Do print a Time and Talent Catalog made up of those descriptions that can be handed out at the fair. Be creative.
6. Do include all the names and phones numbers of contact persons for each of the organizations.
7. Do get the word out as soon as the date is chosen.
8. Do invite each organization to set up a display table/booth for visitors to look at.
9. Do make sure every table/booth has someone available at all times during the fair in order to answer questions or sign up new members.
10. Do have a contest between the organizations for the best or most creative display.
11. Do set your tables up in a manner that maximizes visibility for all the organizations.
12. Do provide some sort of food and beverage during your fair. (This is a must.)
13. Do locate the ministry fair in the social hall after all the Masses during Time and Talent Education Sunday. This way you can maximize attendance.
14. Do take some pictures of your displays. It will make planning easier next time and it will help you explain your fair to people who were not there.

### ***DON'TS***

1. Don't try to host a fair with minimum planning. Take time to plan your fair well. Start early.
2. Don't expect every organization to set up a display.
3. Don't try to do it all yourself. Enlist the aid of volunteers. You'll be surprised how many people will be willing to work with you.
4. Don't force any organization to participate. Instead, let the positive impact of stewardship work on those who will wish later that they would have participated.
5. Don't criticize any display. Instead, thank and encourage the group that has put one together, even if there is no creativity.
6. Don't allow soliciting to go on during the fair. Soliciting at this time will work against you, as it will reduce the number of people willing to engage with the booths and those staffing the booths. Make a pulpit announcement after Communion on Time and Talent Education Sunday that clarifies the informational purpose of the Ministry Fair and assures parishioners that there will be no solicitation for volunteer efforts at the Ministry Fair. Ask the parishioners to explore opportunities, ask questions and bring the commitment forms they received in the mail to Mass the next Sunday. (The Stewardship Committee should ensure that there will be forms in the pews on Commitment Sunday, and those not bringing completed ones from home will be given "encouragement" and time to complete one at the end of the homily.)